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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KINSHASA 000991

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [MARR](#) [CG](#) [UG](#) [RW](#)

SUBJECT: KABILA RELAXED AND UPBEAT IN FAREWELL MEETING WITH
AMBASSADOR

REF: A. KINSHASA 888

[B](#). KINSHASA 949

[C](#). KAMPALA 1272

[D](#). KINSHASA 882

[E](#). KINSHASA 932

Classified By: PolCouns DBrown, reasons 1.4 b/d

[1](#). (C) Summary. During Ambassador Meece's August 14 farewell call, President Kabila asked for greater USG involvement in building democratic institutions and reforming the security sector. Kabila believes the border dispute with Uganda can be resolved. He cited a date certain (September 3) for a visit by the Rwandan foreign minister. He confirmed that Banyamulenge politician Azarias Ruberwa has agreed to work to defuse the conflict in South Kivu's High Plateaus. He acknowledged that North Kivu is a more difficult challenge but expressed optimism that a peaceful solution can be reached. Clearly relaxed and optimistic, Kabila evinced appreciation for U.S. activities in the DRC, in contrast to his snub of the UK Ambassador when he left Kinshasa last month. Ambassador Meece did not clear this cable. End summary.

[2](#). (SBU) Ambassador Meece paid a farewell courtesy call on President Kabila August 14 prior to departing post that evening. Kabila seemed relaxed and in good spirits. DCM Sam Brock also participated; Kabila's political and diplomatic counselor Marcellin Cishambo sat in initially but departed shortly after the meeting began.

[3](#). (SBU) Kabila reiterated requests for greater USG involvement in two areas: consolidation of democracy and security sector reform. He emphasized in particular the need for training of soldiers (ref A). He said he realized we had many overseas commitments, but emphasized the importance of continued engagement in these areas by the United States.

[4](#). (C) Kabila confirmed that Ugandan Foreign Minister Sam Kutesa had left Kinshasa that morning after having arrived for meetings the day before. Kabila was sanguine about a resolution to the current border dispute with Uganda (refs B, C). He said a joint commission would be established to manage bilateral tensions, including the border dispute, which he said involves an island in Lake Albert claimed by Uganda but inhabited by Congolese.

[5](#). (C) He alluded to the Tripartite Plus process, calling it useful, noting only a quote problem with the Plus endquote. He did not elaborate on objections to Burundian participation, but said he hoped many issues could be solved bilaterally while maintaining the process. He also said

Rwandan Foreign Minister Charles Murigande had agreed to meetings in Kinshasa September 3.

¶6. (C) Kabila stated former Vice President Azarias Ruberwa had agreed to play an active role in promoting peace vis--vis his fellow Banyamulenge in South Kivu. Kabila had met with the RCD leader immediately prior to meeting the ambassador. Ruberwa and the ambassador spoke briefly as Ruberwa was leaving Kabila's office; Ruberwa seemed pleased with his meeting with the president.

¶7. (C) What Kabila told the ambassador was consistent with what Ruberwa had said to the ambassador the previous day. At that meeting the ambassador made the case for Ruberwa assuming greater leadership in resolving the conflict. He argued for the need to persuade the 200 armed Banyamulenge dissidents to commit firmly to integration or demobilization, arrange modalities with MONUC or local authorities, proceed with inter-community dialogue, and make public statements confirming these commitments. Ruberwa, who continues to maintain close ties to the dissidents, expressed agreement.

¶8. (C) Kabila also noted that the North Kivu inter-community conference agreed to by Congolese leaders (ref D) will be held in late September. He acknowledged that North Kivu would be a tougher nut to crack than South Kivu. Nonetheless, he was upbeat about prospects for peace, asserting the worst of the violence was over and expressing confidence that with dialogue all contentious issues could be solved.

¶9. (C) Comment. Kabila's willingness to meet with the American ambassador is of itself noteworthy, as he had

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reportedly declined to receive the British ambassador for a similar call last month. Ambassador Meece's constant commitment to maintaining the U.S.-DRC relationship throughout his tour in Kinshasa was undoubtedly a major reason. Kabila's openness and upbeat mood contrasted markedly with recent meetings with European interlocutors, with whom he has reportedly been withdrawn and even chilly. End comment.

¶10. (U) Ambassador Meece did not/not clear this cable.
BROCK